

By ARTHUR BRISBANE.
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Did you read carefully the report of the Congressional committee investigating the spending and stealing of money in connection with the so-called "aircraft" program of the United States Government?

Can you imagine anything more discouraging for those that hope to see democratic government established finally on an honest basis?

The Secretary of War chose some of the richest citizens of the United States to spend the money contributed by all the people of the United States for the country's defense.

Perhaps he thought that because they were rich they would be honest, being able to afford it. The Government spent for flying machines a billion and a quarter, and all it actually got was 218 "clumsy, utterly dangerous" machines made by the Government, and 527 machines bought from the Allies.

A highly honorable gentleman, extracted from Wall Street to help his country in time of war, is said by the Congressional committee to have built a railroad useful to another railroad in which he is a high official.

A second patriot is said to have squandered thirty millions. Just how much was actually stolen nobody will know. Is it nobody's business to find out? Is there no one in the Government to take action when a Congressional committee publicly accuses men whom it names of squandering, appropriating to their own interest, or stealing more than one thousand millions of public money?

When the first appropriation for flying machines was made in Congress, this writer printed a paragraph in The Washington Times as follows:

"Six hundred millions for flying machines. How much of it for graft?" Indignation was expressed that such base suspicion should exist. It turns out that the whole six hundred millions were for graft, and that wasn't enough. Six hundred other millions were added to it.

Men are shot in war for going to sleep, neglecting the interest of their country. Wouldn't it be justice if a few were shot for remaining wide awake, robbing their country, sending across the ocean flying machines that endangered lives and destroyed lives, and making a joke of the efficiency and honesty of so-called representative citizens?

Next Sunday the world will celebrate the birthday of George Washington.

It is cheerful to remember in these days of Wall Street patriots and thieves that the United States has had men that would not steal, no matter how tempting the opportunity. It is pleasing, also, for the comfort of many honest rich men that live in the United States today to remember that Washington was the richest man in the United States. This did not inspire him with any desire to rob his country and get more money.

How many really great men are there in history? Who can mention twenty-four, aside from science, art and literature, whose names will live a thousand years hence? Take out the fighters who distinguished themselves by killing other men or whose successful wars forced knowledge on ignorant peoples and it is difficult to name one dozen.

Washington undoubtedly will live not merely for what he did, establishing that which, in numbers and wealth at least, is the greatest country in the world. He will live for what he himself was.

WEATHER:
Fair, somewhat colder tonight; lowest temperature about 34 degrees. Tomorrow fair; not quite so cold. Temperature at 8 a. m. 30 degrees.

COURT GRANTS HEARST INJUNCTION

Shipping Board Now Convinced Its Policy Has Been Wrong, Stevens Tells Senators

Justice Bailey's Decision Forbidding Sale of Merchant Fleet

"At the hearing of the application for the issuance of a temporary injunction, counsel for the defendant waived for the purposes of such application, all question of the right in the plaintiff to bring this suit; and the sole question submitted to the court for decision is the legal one, whether the defendants are authorized by law to sell the ships described in the bill.

"After a careful examination of the statutes, I am of the opinion that they do not show an intention on the part of Congress to place in the President, or in any of his appointees or subordinate agencies or in these defendants the power to sell these ships, and that no such power has been granted by Congress.

"An injunction as prayed in the bill will issue pendente lite.

"I should be glad to have suggestions from counsel as to the penalty of the injunction bond."

U. S. ADRIATIC REPLY READY

President Completes Draft and Gives It to Polk for Transmission.

Wilson's Threat To Allies.

"The President would take into serious consideration the withdrawal of America from the Treaty of Versailles and from the treaty between the United States and France."

President Wilson today completed his reply to the Supreme Council's note in the dispute over the Adriatic settlement, and placed it in the hands of Acting Secretary of State Polk for transmission to Europe.

The President's answer is understood to be brief and to the point. He started work on it this morning, dictating it to a stenographer, and the completed document was taken to the State Department shortly before noon, it was learned at the White House.

Handled Reply By Himself.

Wilson handled the reply entirely without outside advice, so far as could be ascertained. The speed with which he formulated it recalled the rapidity of exchange of notes preceding the armistice. The supreme council's communication, which is understood to have invited suggestions for the President on settlement of the Plume problem, was delivered to him only last evening.

The President, it was reported, had decided not to make public the correspondence between himself and the supreme council until after the Adriatic situation had been satisfactorily adjusted.

President Wilson's original note, it was said, was dictated by him and transmitted through Secretary Lansing. The latter had nothing to do with it, beyond reading it before it was put on the cables. The Adriatic situation had no relation to the Wilson-Lansing clash, officials said.

The allied reply to Wilson's original protest against the proposed settlement, it is understood, invited suggestions from the President, while at the same time it sought to justify the steps already taken in the situation.

The ultimatum to the Jugo-Slavs, ordering them to accept the proposed settlement has been held up because of President Wilson's protest, it was learned.

May Make Notes Public.

The United States has cabled the allied governments asking whether the correspondence between President Wilson and the supreme council may be made public. Meanwhile, it is being withheld.

Board of Education Votes Seven to One For Ousting Thurston

By a vote of seven to one, Dr. Abram Simon dissenting, the Board of Education, in a special meeting held at noon today, decided to notify Ernest L. Thurston, superintendent of schools, that his services with the public school system would not be required or desired after June 30 next.

Reason for Action.

The Board's reasons for the action follow: Mr. Thurston is not an able administrator. He is reluctant to take full responsibility.

Differences between the superintendent and the Board have reached the point where they cannot effectively work together. A committee composed of Dr. John Van Schaick, president; Charles P. Neill, and Mrs. C. F. Cook, was named to seek a successor to the present superintendent.

Fountain Peyton, colored member of the board, was not present, and was the only member of the board who did not vote. He is said to favor retaining Mr. Thurston as superintendent. The following resolution was adopted at the meeting:

"Resolved, That the best interests of the public schools of the District of Columbia call for the election of a successor to Ernest L. Thurston as Superintendent of Schools, said election to be effective at the close of the present term.

"Resolved, That Superintendent Thurston be not reappointed at the close of his present term, and that he be so advised by the secretary of board.

Votes by Telegraph.

Dr. H. C. Learned, member of the board, now lecturing in Stanford University, voted by telegraph. The telegram, which was put officially into the record of the meeting, follows:

"I could not vote for Thurston another term under any condition. My record up last June, Wood case and Bryce situation largely his responsibility. Convinced that we can and must obtain better administration. No ill will toward Thurston, but regard him as impossible in situation."

Teachers Back Thurston. Teachers in the public schools favor Mr. Thurston as superintendent, and look upon the action of the Board of Education with disapproval. This was the indication today after a canvass had been made of officers of the several unions and associations in the schools to determine just how Mr. Thurston is looked upon by the faculties.

There is little, if any, likelihood of the organizations taking any formal action, either to approve or disapprove Mr. Thurston as superintendent of the local public school system.

No union or association has ever gone on record as opposed to Mr. Thurston. It was stated today that the superintendent had always shown a willingness to co-operate with the teachers in every way possible.

LABOR FIGHTS RAILROAD BILL

Letter Outlining Organizations' Stand to Go to President From Gompers.

Labor today decided to fight the Esch-Cummins bill which provides for regulation of the railroads after their return to their owners March 1.

While this decision was being reached at American Federation of Labor headquarters here today, railroad executives were meeting with Rail Director Hines to discuss wages and other problems connected with return of the roads.

Gompers to Write Wilson. Labor opposition to the railroad bill will be set forth, according to present plans, in a letter to President Wilson, signed by Samuel Gompers, president of the American Federation of Labor.

This communication was being framed today at a meeting attended by Gompers, B. M. Jewell, head of the federal railway department, and officials of the big railway unions.

Following publication of the letter, labor leaders say they will marshal their friends in Congress for a battle on the bill which is to come up in the House Saturday and in the Senate next week.

Sixteen members of the House are former labor union men, and others are known to be against the Esch-Cummins measure.

Labor leaders today called the bill a "hodge-podge" despite the fact that it sets up tribunals for wage disputes minus any compulsory feature.

One clause, however, provides for introduction of wage disputes before these tribunals through petition by 100 "unorganized" employees. This, leaders say, is a discrimination against organized labor.

Behind the decision to fight the Esch-Cummins bill stands labor's desire for a two-year extension of Government control. Whether Gompers and railroad union heads still have hopes of accomplishing this in unknown.

They made known today, however, that they will carry their fight against the Esch-Cummins bill to the President, seeking to have him veto it, if it is passed by Congress.

The meeting of railroad executives with Hines today was taken as an indication that Wilson has no present intention of changing his mind about the return of the roads.

MARTIAL LAW DECREED IN THE SAAR DISTRICT

LONDON, Feb. 19.—Martial law has been declared in the Saar district of Germany, as a result of new disturbances that have broken out there, said an Exchange Telegraph dispatch from Amsterdam today.

Wilson Soon to Get Back to Typewriter. President Wilson is expected soon to get back to work on his typewriter, according to Dr. Grayson. The President's daily routine now includes an hour at his desk in his study before his two-hour "airing" in the grounds of the White House.

CALLS MARINE FIRM BRITISH

Not An American on Board, Shipping Expert Tells Senate Probers.

John D. York, of Chicago, former dollar-a-year expert with the Shipping Board during the war, directly repudiated the declaration of Chairman John Barton Payne that the International Mercantile Marine, principal bidder for the ex-German ships, was a "100 per cent American concern" when he took the stand this morning before the Commerce Committee.

"There is not an American on the I. M. M. board," he told the committee.

Mr. York further charged that the International Mercantile Marine offered the Shipping Board \$60 a ton for its finest German ships, including the Leviathan, while it was paying \$160 a ton in British water for ordinary tramp steamers.

Says Chairman Is British. "The chairman of the board of the I. M. M. Company is Harold A. Sanderson, a British subject, resident of London," Mr. York declared.

The president is P. A. S. Franklin, a citizen of New York. The finance committee includes Mr. Sanderson, of London; J. P. Morgan, Charles Steele, Mr. Morgan's partner, and E. C. Grenfell, Mr. Morgan's London partner, another British subject and a resident of London.

"The most valuable asset of the I. M. M. are the fine steamers of the White Star line, every share of whose stock is deposited in the treasury of the I. M. M. the so-called American holding company, but the executive committee, in absolute control of the operations of this company is Harold Sanderson, chairman and managing director; E. C. Grenfell, president, Morgan's London partner; Lord Pirrie, and Alexander Kerr, all four being British subjects. There is not an American on the board."

In substantiating the claim that the German ships, if sold to the International Mercantile Marine would revert to the British flag, Mr. York called the attention of the committee to a stringent agreement in the laws of the corporation entered into when it absorbed certain American lines.

Must Fly British Flag.

The clause reads: "The British vessels shall remain British, not merely nominally, but in reality. A majority of the directors of the English subsidiary companies shall always be of British nationality, the vessel shall fly the British flag, their officers shall be British and a reasonable portion of their crew shall be drawn from the same nation."

By this agreement, binding for twenty years and renewable for five years more between the British government and the new company, York declared the "British" suffix safeguarded the maintenance of their maritime supremacy.

Mr. York said, as a representative of the corporation entered into when it absorbed certain American lines.

Keeping Up The Time

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CONGRESS ALONE HAS THE POWER TO SELL SHIPS, JURIST RULES

Justice Thomas J. Bailey, of the District Supreme Court, today granted a temporary injunction in the suit of William Randolph Hearst against the Shipping Board and its officers, enjoining them from selling at auction thirty German ships, taken by the United States during the war.

Counsel for plaintiff and defendants in all probability will confer with Justice Bailey tomorrow about fixing the bond to be given by Mr. Hearst. The date for the hearing to make the injunction permanent probably will be also set tomorrow.

"The decision was no surprise," counsel for Mr. Hearst said after the court had rendered its verdict. "The suit was well founded and we were certain of our position," they said. "The judge declared the law as the law clearly is. Congress never authorized the sale of enemy alien ships. The President never authorized the sale of enemy alien ships. What Congress and the President did was to authorize the sale of domestic ships."

Congress Alone Can Sell Ships. Justice Bailey, referring to the question of his decision, said: "After a careful examination of the statutes, the opinion that they do not show an intention of Congress to place in the President or in his appointees or in the defendants the power to sell these ships, and that no such power has been granted by Congress."

Continuing, Justice Bailey said: "At the hearing of the application for the issuance of a temporary injunction, counsel for the defendant waived for the purposes of such application all question to the right in the plaintiff to bring this suit, and the whole question submitted to the court for decision is the legal one whether the defendants are authorized by law to sell the ships described in the bill."

"I should be glad to have suggestions from counsel as to the penalty of the injunction bond," he concluded.

Decision Comes as Surprise. The decision was not expected until tomorrow, came as a surprise to counsel for both sides.

Bailey announced it today. Court attaches no importance to the decision today by saying that the court "would hand down a decision by Friday."

Bailey meant he would decide the temporary injunction that day, at the latest.

Neither counsel for Mr. Hearst nor counsel for the Shipping Board were in court when the decision was rendered.

The papers in the suit of William A. DeFord, Joseph A. DeFord, and the firm of Hearst, last Friday.

An appeal from the temporary injunction proceeding the Shipping Board.

CHARLESTON HOSPITAL DAMAGED BY BLAZE

CHARLESTON, S. C., Feb. 19.—Fire early today destroyed the mess hall and galley of the naval hospital here. For a time the flames threatened to spread to the entire hospital and bedridden patients were removed.

\$50,000,000 COST TO ENFORCE DRY LAW, ESTIMATE

It is conservatively estimated that it may cost the Government as much as \$50,000,000 to enforce national prohibition, Senator Warren, Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, declared in the Senate this afternoon.

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